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Noted Fire Chief Gives Views on Fire Conditions in Hickman.

The writer asked Chief Tyson for statement as to what he considered the conditions in Hickman pertaining to fire protection. After some hesitation the Chief consented to make the following statement:

"Your city is in a deplorable condition as regards fire protection. You are almost without fire protection. I was very much surprised to learn that a city the size of Hickman, with the various fire hazards, contained within its corporate limits and surrounding territory, was without a fire chief backed up with an organization of volunteer firemen. I would suggest that his honor, the Mayor and members of Council, get busy at once, and select some competent man and elect him Fire Chief with authority to organize a volunteer company composed of not less than twenty-five members, and more if it is possible to secure them. It does seem to me that if the young men of Hickman were given proper support and encouragement you would have no trouble in securing fifty members for the organization under

present conditions. An insurance company is certainly possessed of considerable nerve to place insurance in a city with as little protection as Hickman has. My prediction is that if conditions are not improved you will have a fire some day with a high wind blowing that will wipe your city off the face of the earth. I have visited all of your hose reels and found them in an almost useless condition. No care taken of them whatever. This condition is brought about by not having an organization with some one in authority to detail some one to look after and keep the equipment in proper condition and ready at all times to be serviceable during time of fire. I don't want to appear as an alarmist but the lives and property of the citizens of Hickman are constantly in jeopardy, it is almost criminal negligence."

"In the event we purchase a piece of motor apparatus where would you suggest placing it for the safest and most efficient service?"

"By all means on top of hill

It would be much easier to come down the hill to a fire in the congested district which could be done from the neighborhood of the court house in about two minutes. Being on the hill you would be able to give more prompt and efficient service to the residence district and your very large school building, where the greatest danger exists to loss of life, where as if you were called to a fire on the hill during bad weather the progress would necessarily be very slow on account of the steep grades, if the apparatus was stationed in the bottom."

"As a rule would the installation of modern motor fire apparatus, and the appointment of a competent fire chief, with a volunteer company, under strict discipline trained in modern methods of fire fighting, have a tendency to reduce the insurance rates?"

"Most assuredly it would and I believe every insurance company will agree with me and will cheerfully allow a reasonable and sensible reduction, and the amount of insurance saved by the reduced

rate to the citizens of Hickman would soon cover the expense incurred in the purchase of modern equipment. I would also suggest that all two (2) inch outlets on your present fire hydrants be changed to accommodate two and one half (2 1/2) inch hose.

"I also noticed one thing in particular that will be very dangerous for motor fire apparatus going to a fire on Clinton street. That is, the shape of the street. It has too much crown. Should the apparatus attempt to go round a buggy or wagon, it would be pretty apt to land against the curb. This street should be graded to proper shape to allow the use of same from curb to curb. This should be done before the apparatus is placed in service. In its present condition it is very dangerous, especially in wet weather."

"I have covered your city pretty thoroughly during my stay by way of inspection. I find several buildings that should be condemned and torn down at

(Continued on last page.)

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